



Bluffton Police Department

Media Release

January 8, 2014

For More Information:

Sgt. D. Scott Chandler
Bluffton Police Department
Supervisor, Neighborhood Services Unit
101 Progressive Street
Bluffton, South Carolina 29910
(Phone) 843.706.4550
(Email): dchandler@townofbluffton.com

May River Toys Donates Nearly 50 Stuffed Animals to the Bluffton Police Department
Toys will be Used to Comfort Children at Accident and Crime Scenes

Jaja and Christopher Epps, owners of May River Toys, wanted to be more involved in the community through their new business.

Brainstorming with fellow Rotary member, Councilmember Karen Lavery, they decided to donate fluffy, soft, stuffed animals to the Bluffton Police Department so officers can give them to children at accident and crime scenes for comfort.

Last month, Jaja (pronounced “Yaya”) and Christopher Epps loaded up Sgt. Scott Chandler’s trunk so he could deliver the toys to officers at the department.

“Each officer has an inventory of tools at their fingertips to serve Bluffton,” Sgt. Chandler said. “Among our tools, now, are stuffed animals.

“Our first task is to be a peace officer and we hope these animals will bring comfort to our littlest residents.”

Jaja and Christopher Epps said they came up with the idea when they saw a child on Calhoun Street who must have fallen and was hurt. They said they came out of their shop which is located on Calhoun Street and handed the crying boy a stuffed animal.

“The second we gave him the animal, he calmed down,” Jaja Epps said. “It kept his mind off what was going on. We said to each other if it’s that easy to help with a stuffed animal, we should give them to the police department so our toys can help when a child is involved in an accident or a serious incident.”

Fellow Rotary member and Town Councilmember, Karen Lavery, connected the couple with Bluffton Police Chief Joey Reynolds.

“Businesses, such as May River Toys, who partner with our public safety mission underscores how so many are concerned about the well-being of their neighbors,” Reynolds said. “Gestures like this make Bluffton a special community to serve.”

Chandler said a stuffed animal is a small way to comfort a child and it may form a lasting impression about the role of police in their community.

“It’s a good day when we can do our jobs and comfort a child at the same time,” Chandler said. “Thanks to May River toys, our job just got a little easier.”